

PROFESSIONAL ADVERTISING **PHOTOGRAPHY**

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A mini-thesis submitted towards the subject Visual Communications III

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Table of contents

Table of contents

Declaration

List of illustrations

List of Author's images

Introduction	1
Chapter 1.	
The Advertising Photography Process.	2
Chapter 2.	
Equipment	4
The View Camera.	6
Chapter 3.	
Possible problems and solutions.	7
Glass	7
Metal	8
Compositional elements.	10
Chapter 4.	
The authors approach to advertising photography.	12
The reason the author chose this field.	12
How the author plans an image.	12
Professional photographers.	13
Chapter 5.	
Discussion of author's work	16
Equipment used by author	16
Conclusion	48
Bibliography	49

I hereby declare that the work contained in this mini-thesis is my own independent work and that all sources consulted or cited have been indicated in full.

Signature: 

Date: 25/10/99

List of Illustrations:

Pen illustration by Joe Braun	i.
Advertisement by Gary Perweiler	ii.
Advertisement by Joe Braun	iii.

List of Author's images:

1. Mellow Wood Brandy	20
2. Pears	23
3. St. Raphael	26
4. Koo	29
5. Heineken	32
6. Dreams	35
7. Draught Guinness	38
8. Cutlery	41
9. Glen Grant	44
10. Valpre`	47

INTRODUCTION

' Ads should slap you in the face, and then kiss you. '

Jeff Weiss, creative director. (Saunders, 1994:15)

Professional advertising photography is an immensely competitive field where only the most skilled, creative and imaginative photographers survive. It is a field that demands technical perfection, hard work and a successful image every time.

Advertising has grown into one of the largest businesses in the world where people are bombarded with thousands of advertisements everyday, but only a few stand out. So how do you catch a person's attention, how do you stop a person from turning the page, taking another look and making the connection?

Photographs are extremely powerful tools of communication enabling the photographer to take an idea and transform it into an image that can both attract attention and give information, while at the same time it can delve into your subconscious, intrigue your mind and touch your emotions. Advertising photography is an exciting business, and as one of the most challenging and demanding fields of photography, it takes hard work, determination and of course good photographs to succeed.

The following chapters will cover the process of how an advertisement is made, concentrating on the role of the photographer, the equipment used in this field and also some examples of work from professionals. The second half of the script will be about the author's own work, his personal approach to advertising and why he chose this field.

THE ADVERTISING PHOTOGRAPHY PROCESS

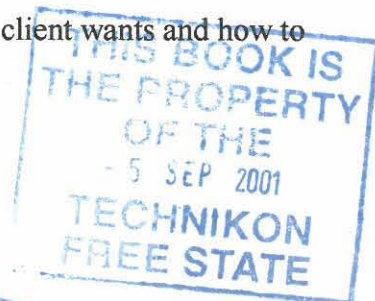
‘ The emotion comes first and what you're selling comes afterwards. ‘

Malcolm Gaskin, creative director. (Saunders, 1994:43)

The advertising photographer plays a vital role in promoting products and services. By nature creative and imaginative, he or she must also be technically skilled, able to co-ordinate people, communicate ideas and work as one member of a team.

It is the idea that forms the basis of any advertising concept. The original concept grows from a brief from the client. He will explain the advantages of the product, and it is up to the art director and copywriter to single out one aspect on which to focus their thinking. The idea has to fit into the overall strategy of the campaign. It must also please the client, suit the product and be consistent with market research. After the art director and his team has finalized the exact outlines of the advertisement, they give this information to the photographer. Although in this way the photographer is not always the first person to work on the original idea, it is important that the concept must be understood and agreed upon by all members of the creative team, including of course, the photographer. Many times though it is left up to the photographers own experience and creative mind to come up with the ‘great’ idea (Saunders, 1988:8).

After the photographer has been fully briefed he will usually start to plan the photographic session, deciding about composition, lighting, props and sets that needs to be built. He works as part of a team together with the art director, and there for they have to agree on all aspects of the assignment, what the client wants and how to achieve this.



Each photographer works in a different way, some will execute a concept exactly as told, as fast as possible, while others might take their time to explore the concept and make test photographs to show to the client with possible suggestions. Most of the time the client will have strict ideas of how they want the image to look, and some photographers will work according to this, but then also photograph it according to their own idea. Elliot Erwitt, legendary photographer, co-founder of Magnum Photo Agency and world class advertising photographer always shoots his advertising this way, and most of the time the client goes with his idea instead.

He said:

“ The most pleasurable assignments are those with no specific brief, but where you know what result you have to achieve. You’re free; you can use your imagination and you really try hard. You are able to perform better because it’s more of a personal effort. “ (Saunders, 1988:59).

The client may be present during a photographic session telling the photographer exactly what needs to be changed or when a image is perfect, or the agency can put together a quick example of the advertisement and the client can then decide if any changes are needed. Since huge amounts of money are spend on advertising campaigns, and since an advertisement can make or break a product, it is necessary for the client and their agency to do market research, use focus groups and of course choose the best photographer for the assignment. Almost every advertising photographer has his own unique style, and are chosen for a specific assignment because of it. A good advertising photographer always tries to incorporate his way of seeing into an image, and even if he has to work according to a strict brief, his creative style will always show in his work.

EQUIPMENT

‘Photography is about light; it’s more important than film or cameras or any of the other gadgets I use.’

Joe Braun, Advertising Photographer. (Brown, Braun, Grodin. 1990:7)

The following chapter will discuss the equipment used by an advertising photographer, concentrating on lighting equipment and the view camera. In advertising the photographer spends most of his time in the studio, where he has full control of all the aspects of lighting and the environment. All types of light have unique characteristics and convey different moods. Light is used as a tool in the studio to capture the essence of products and people. (Braun, 1990:7). The type of light used depends on the photographer, but most advertising photographers uses electronic flash. The main reasons for this is that flash runs cool compared to the hot Tungsten lights and it is much more versatile considering the big soft boxes used by some photographers. Flash also possess the important ability to easily ‘freeze’ movement like liquids and other moving objects. From a economical point, flash have less power consumption than tungsten and with longer lasting bulbs it works out much cheaper in the long run.

Here follows a list of lighting equipment and tools used in the studio:

- **Coloured Gel:** A transparent, coloured material which changes the colour of the light passing through it.
- **Diffuser:** Material placed over or in front of a light source to soften and spread light.
- **Electronic Flash Head:** Light source for strobe lighting. Range of different strengths like 2000, 3000, 4000 etc.

- **Power Pack:** A unit containing capacitors to store an electric charge with enough power to jump between two points in a flash tube when released, providing a brief, bright flash. Also has sockets for connecting light heads and various switches and knobs to control the output of power to light heads.
- **Snoot:** A circular or cone-shaped attachment fitted over a strobe head to narrow the beam of light.
- **Grid Spot:** A honeycombed attachment made of flat, black material to direct light in a narrow beam. The smaller the size of the honeycombs, the narrower the beam.
- **Softbox:** Light source in an enclosure with a front panel composed of translucent material that diffuses the light passing through it, and reflective sides and back.
- **Electronic Flash (Strobe):** Light source that illuminates with a powerful burst of light for a very short duration (a flash) that provides Kelvin temperature of 5000 – 5500 degrees.
- **Tungsten Light:** Light source that provides a constant illumination by using a glowing tungsten filament suspended in gas that's enclosed in glass. Provides a colour temperature of 2400 – 3400 degrees Kelvin.
- **Reflector:** Device that bounces light back into certain areas of a subject, usually made with a shiny, reflective surface.
- **View Camera:** Large format camera that allows precision focusing on its ground glass; generally uses a large-format sheet film. Allows delicate and precise perspective control through adjustments of both the lens and the back of the camera.
- **Tent:** A structure created to envelop a product and reflect a continuous, uninterrupted surface into the product.

(Brown, Braun, Grodin, 1990:10).

The View Camera

This type of camera design relates back directly to the earliest form of photographic plate camera, as used by pioneers such as Louis Daguerre. Equipment then consisted of two boxes, one sliding inside the other for focusing, and having a lens at the front and a ground glass screen at the back (Langford, 1986:62).

The view cameras used today are large format cameras designed to use sheet film, although they can be adapted with the appropriate back to take smaller sheet film, rollfilm or instant-picture material like Polaroid. The most popular size is 4 x 5 inch, although many professionals prefer the very large 8 x 10 inch cameras. Other sizes include 7 x 5 inch and 9 x 6.5 cm.

In this regard, Langford (1986:63) lists the following advantages of a large format view camera:

- Cameras offer an unrivalled range of camera movements, especially monorail designs.
- You can take and process single exposures. When working in the studio this allows a check on each result as you go along.
- Relatively simple construction. There's little to go wrong.
- The large format and static nature of the camera encourage you to build up carefully considered compositions, almost like drawing or painting.
- Excellent for architectural, landscape and still-life photography for close-ups and copying, because even the normal-length bellows allows considerable lens-film extension.
- Large-format image quality, with choice of special film types.

POSSIBLE PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

In advertising photography, each assignment is different from the next. No matter how similar, each object has to be lit a different way, and therefore each has its own problems. These problems can range from lighting to composition to special effects etc. The only way for a professional photographer to cope with these problems, is through experimentation and learning from his or her mistakes.

The two most common lighting problems found in studio work are as follows:

Glass

The lighting of glass has always been difficult and many photographers cringe when they look through the ground glass and see hotspots (created by the reflection of the lights in the glass) staring out at them. Although hotspots can sometimes be used to great effect, in most advertising it will distract the eye from the product name, and should then be avoided. The types of glass photographed in advertising are endless ranging mostly from beverages to cosmetics in glass containers of all shapes and sizes. When lighting glass certain aspects should be considered: the shape, texture and colour of the glass, the type of liquid in the glass container and the product name on the container. The general approach to lighting glass is by lighting it from the sides, behind or from underneath. When lighting glass from the sides large light sources work best. Long soft boxes close to the object are ideal, creating a white band of light on the side of the container. Backlighting can be combined with side lighting to illuminate the liquid inside the container. This can be done either through a diffusing material like curved opal Perspex or Lucite, or with the use of reflectors.

Small reflectors or mirrors can be placed behind containers reflecting the light directed at it through the container. Lighting glass from underneath can be very successful. Using Perspex or some other surface to diffuse the light can be the best way of illuminating the liquid inside a container. Undiffused light through a glass surface on which the container stands can also create interesting effects, but must be controlled so as not to look fake with light spilling out underneath. When lighting glass from the back or underneath the problem exists that the brand name will not be visible. Side lighting, using a light tent, or using a small torch to illuminate the name during a second exposure can solve this.

Metal (see next page diagram)

The lighting of metal objects like cutlery, jewelry and tools are all very different depending on what the photographer wants to achieve. Lighting metal is a very difficult problem because metal sees anything you show it (Brown, 1990:46).

Therefore using the wrong lighting will cause reflections of you, the camera and even the whole studio on the metallic surface. With cutlery and tools there are always the problem of reflections from the flat surfaces of spoons and knives, tool handles etc. This can be solved by using a light tent (see page 5) with just the camera lens on the inside, and lights from all sides outside the tent creating an even illumination with pure white highlights over the entire surface of the metal. But this can sometimes look unnatural leaving the cutlery without any real shape or metallic appearance. To solve this, the next step is to create shadow and line on the surface of the metal. This can be done by using strips of black card placed close to certain parts of the metal, creating black lines and modeling the shape of the metal surfaces. Jewelry is usually very small but the same lighting applies for small objects.

i (Braun, 1990:48)

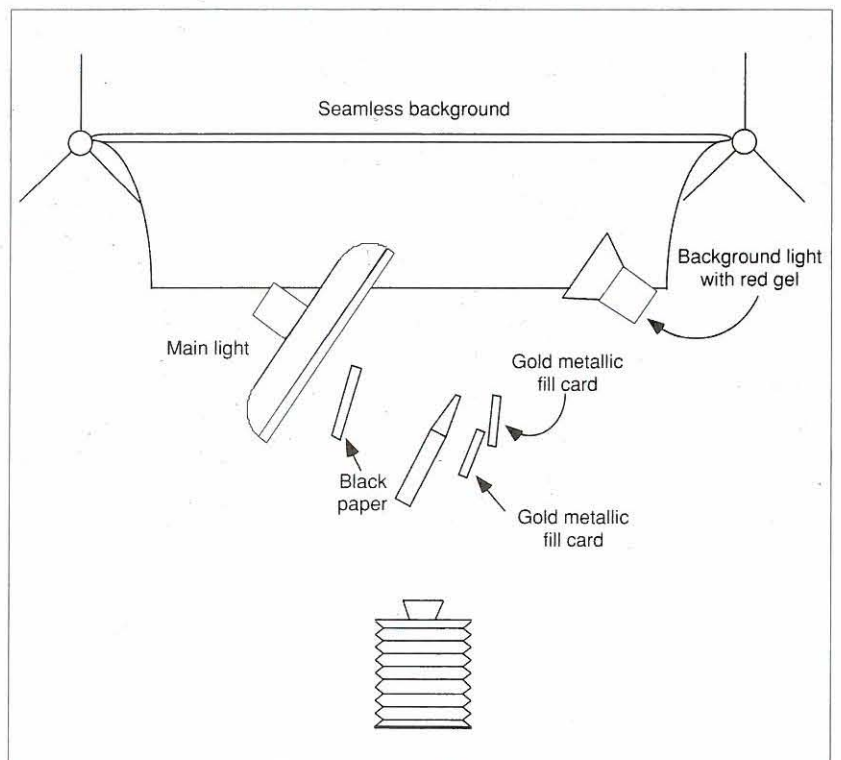
▼ Black paper interrupts the shape of the highlights.



▲ Another gold metallic fill card gives additional flavor to the color.

▲ Playing up the nicks on the pen enhances the natural texture and quality of the gold.

▲ This gold metallic fill card dropped back changes the intensity of light on this strip.



Although a light tent will not necessarily be used because the reflections can be controlled, it is still necessary to carefully sculpt the light accordingly. A good way to work is by bringing the lights as close as possible to the object and just out of frame. This provides long, well-defined highlights (Joel 1990:69). Another problem with photographing jewelry is to correctly photograph precious stones. Some gems soak up light, like rubies, while others reflect light like diamonds. With light absorption, direct light should be used, while reflective stones should be lit with soft even light to eliminate any harsh reflections (Joel 1990:69).

Many other smaller problems in advertising photography have to be solved each day when the photographer works in the studio, and each photographer has his own tricks and gadgets. Like photographer Gary Perweiler, who uses all sorts of tricks from using an iron to put grill marks on steak to painting vegetables with glycerine to give them a wet shiny appearance (Perweiler 1984:63). Liquids and ice are a well-known problem due to the hot lights melting the ice and evaporating water. Molded acrylic ice cubes can be used that look just like the real thing and by using some glycerine, perfect droplets can be formed on bottles and also help prevent fast evaporation. Glycerine can also be used to give food like fruit and vegetables a sheen and deeper colour. (Perweiler 1984:64) Solving these problems every day is a learning process and after a while a photographer will know even before a session what the problems will be and what might be needed to solve it.

One of the most useful items for an advertising photographer to have is a 'bits box'. This is full of things which will come in handy: scalpels, tapes and adhesives of all kinds, pliers of various shapes and descriptions, soft wire, dulling spray, self-adhesive Velcro, all kinds of cleaning materials, various types of modeling clays and putties,

string, elastic bands etc. (Hicks, 1994:15). All this can be extremely handy and help a photographer out in many difficult situations. The advertising photographer should have a storeroom to store everything that might be needed during a photographic session in the studio. This should range from different surfaces like metal, glass and wood, to backgrounds, painted and otherwise. There should also be some other props like crockery, fabrics of various kinds, paints and materials for basic set building.

Compositional elements

The compositional elements are those elements that are used by the photographer to create the image. These elements (design, texture, colour and light) must be brought together in balance to create a successful image.

Design

Design can play a very important part in a photograph. This is one of the areas where a photographer can incorporate his own vision into the image, because every photographer has his own way of seeing and interpreting an object. Every photographer has a unique way of arranging objects, using them together and choosing the angle at which they are photographed. Communicating the right message to the viewer can only be done through careful composition and design. 'The objects, their placement, and the balance and tension that they will create are all carefully considered aspects of design.' (Perweiler 1984:17) Design doesn't necessarily mean that the image should be graphic, but it should be strong, strong enough to grab the viewers attention.

Texture

Have you ever seen a photograph where something looks so real you can touch it? You can almost feel the rough wood, smooth silk fabrics or the texture of leather.

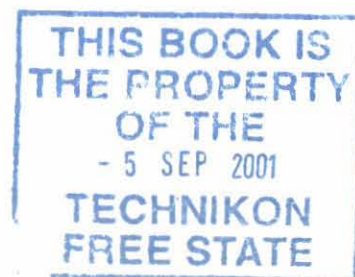
This is a great compositional element that can be used to great effect, especially in food, and still life photography. Texture accentuated with the right lighting can create atmosphere, like smooth fabrics used to advertise body lotion or coarse wood to advertise power tools. Patterns created by texture, either geometric or a paisley design, can be used to create a more organic feel or just the opposite.

Colour

The use of colour can be seen as another compositional element which can be used to create atmosphere, especially with today's films and filters which can create better than true to life colours. The warm glow of a fireplace or cold blues of ice, all depends on colour to make it come to life. Colour is also important in groupings, either using hues of the same colour or arranging objects according to colour can lead to pleasing results. (Perweiler 1984:53)

Light

Finally there is light. This is seen by many photographers to be the most important aspect of advertising photography. Light creates mood and emotion, whether it is the dramatic lighting of a new car advertisement or the comforting warm light used to advertise food. Light is the main tool used to create the image, to draw attention and make the subject beautiful. In lighting for advertising there are two very important steps, namely background and subject lighting. These can be done separately or combined, as long as the two merges together to create the right mood. Both are equally important, a subject without a background doesn't exist and vice versa. The key to lighting is to achieve balance. Balance between the technical aspects like showing the product name or drawing attention, and the emotional side like creating atmosphere and communicating the right feeling.



THE AUTHOR'S APPROACH TO ADVERTISING PHOTOGRAPHY

This chapter will discuss the author's work, why he chose this field and how he plans an image. It will also cover some professional advertising photographers, discussing their individual styles and views on advertising photography, with examples of their work and how they did it.

The reason the author chose this field

The author has experienced all fields of photography and has found advertising to be the most challenging of all. Few other fields requires the same amount of technical, combined with creative skills, like advertising does. The process of developing a concept and executing it, working in the studio, composition and lighting, and to create a successful image, is extremely satisfying. This field gives the author the opportunity to create images that are useful as well as beautiful, to work in a creative field with creative people and for exploration within the medium of photography. The author knows that a good understanding of the advertising process, and the skills necessary to be successful, are very important in this industry.

How the author plans an image

When an assignment is given the photographer will immediately start to think how to photograph it. If it's a product he will think about how the product looks, what it is and who will buy it. He thinks about additional elements he wants to incorporate in the image and specific surfaces and backgrounds to be used. When he has the idea of how he wants the image to look, he will also have a basic idea of the lighting to be used.

It is very important that the lighting convey the right atmosphere, whether it is warm and friendly, bright and energetic or simply beautiful, the lighting sends a message just as important as the product itself. The lighting should fit the product and be balanced between rendering detail and creating a dramatic effect.

Although it helps to preplan a photographic assignment, a lot of planning takes place in the studio setting up the image, changing the lights and perfecting the composition while looking through the ground glass. The author enjoys a wide variety of advertising work ranging from small subtle setups to larger more complex sessions. The approach depends completely on the product, some may require a extreme close-up while others need to be incorporated in a set with other objects to convey the right message. For example an image showing a specific lifestyle associated with the product. Understanding what the product represents and what message you want to convey is vital.

Professional Photographers

A name well known in the advertising world is that of Gary Perweiler. He is one of New York's leading advertising photographers with an impressive portfolio including clients such as Coca Cola, Benson & Hedges, Sony and American Express. Gary is known for his very specific style using very graphic compositions with minimal colour. His training in art and design, studying Swiss graphics before he went into photography influenced this style. ' If the picture isn't carefully composed, and if the design is thoughtless, you won't communicate your concept. The strongest and most graphic images are those in which design has played a primary role, and the power of its effect can't be denied.' (Perweiler 1984:17)

Gary focuses on placing objects in three-dimensional space, and using geometry combined with textures and shape. In comparison with some advertising photographers, he never plans a picture in advance, instead he places the object he wants to shoot in front of the camera and studies it. (Perweiler 1984:57). He moves it around, inspect it from all angles and then decide how to photograph it.

Despite this laid back method of working, he is a perfectionist, working very long hours on one image, moving the lights or searching for the perfect piece of fruit, until the image is perfect. But he always keep in mind what the purpose of the image is:

‘You have to outwit the reader, the viewer. You have to strike him with an image that will stand out from the clutter. If it’s a clean, strong, graphic image, I think the person will stop and look at it.’

Gary Perweiler:

“ To survive in this business you have to be prolific. You feel the pressure always to say it in some new way. It drives you to keep stretching your limits, always to go one step beyond. “ (Salomon 1982:63).

(Example of G. Perweilers work on next page.)

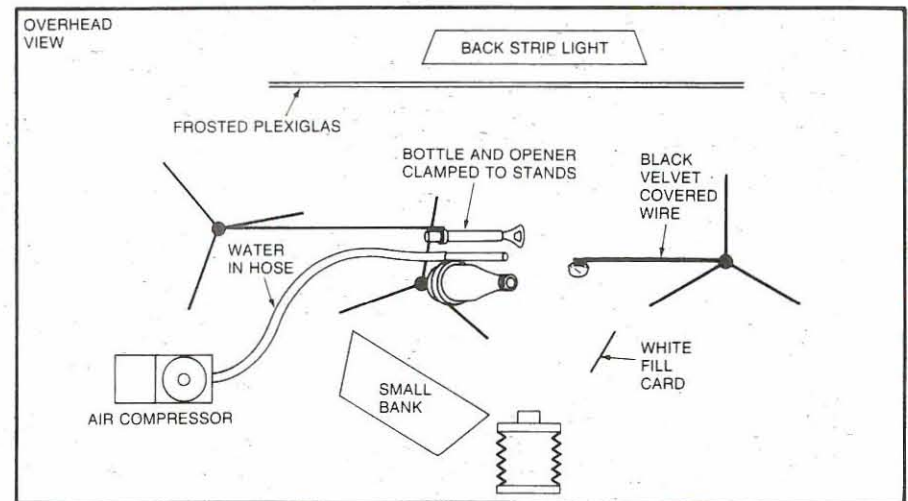
Another professional advertising photographer is Joe Braun, whose work ranges from food, still life, people etc. He has worked in the industry for a long time and has also written a book on studio lighting. All photographers approach each assignment differently: Joe tries to plan his lighting strategy well in advance. He gets an idea of the type of lights he wants to use and where he wants to position them before he starts. He uses three basic approaches to plan each image: First he will previsualize what he wants the photograph to look like, ‘It’s almost as if I have a sketch pad in my head.’ Then he draws on his experience of lighting other subjects.

A LIVELY BOTTLE OF PEPSI

In this shot for Pepsi I wanted the cap, opener, and bottle to work together to create a sense of excitement and motion. To set off the red, white, and blue Pepsi label, the other elements in the picture were neutral—silver, white, and black. I often use color only in the product so that the eye will travel directly to the most important part of the picture.

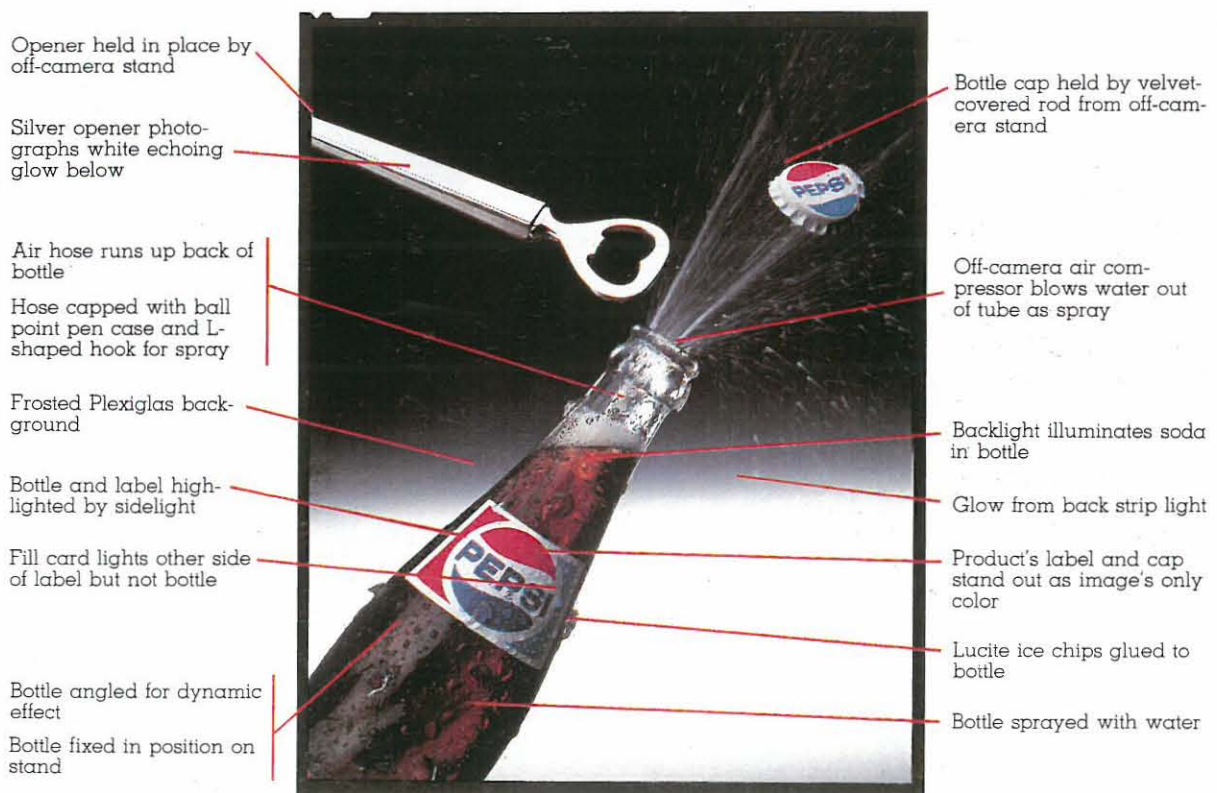
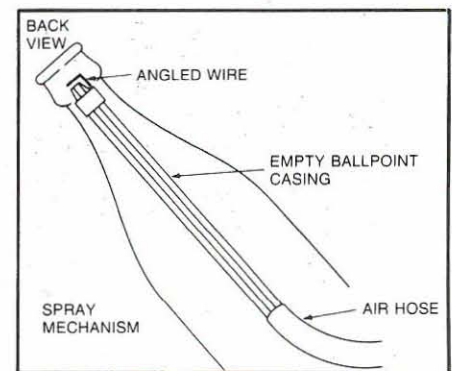
I positioned the cap in mid-air on a wire rod that was covered with black velvet so it was not visible in the final image. I epoxied some Lucite chips to the Pepsi bottle, which I sprayed with water to give the impression of having just been pulled out of a bucket of ice. Then I affixed the bottle on a stand in a steady diagonal position. The Pepsi was diluted with club soda for a lighter consistency. The silver opener was positioned with a clamp in the left-hand corner so it would appear that it was being lifted from the scene.

To achieve the effect of the bursting soda I ran a hose from an air compressor up the back of the bottle. At the end of the hose I attached a ball-point pen casing. The ball had been removed and replaced by a small hook inserted over the tip to make an atomizer, so that when I pumped



compressed air through the nose the water in the tube would emerge from the tip in an exuberant spray rather than a stream.

To create the modulation of light in the background I lit this image from the rear with a strip light placed behind a piece of frosted Plexiglas. This also illuminated the soda so that the color took on a golden glow. A light on the left side created a highlight on the bottle and label, and a fill card, just big enough to fill the label without casting a highlight on the rest of the bottle, was positioned on the right.



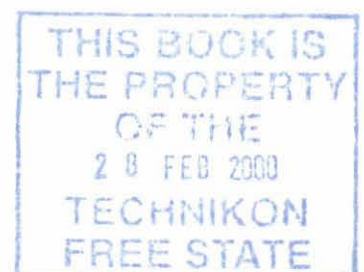


ii (Perweiler, 1984:87)

Maybe using the same lighting setup that worked particularly well for a similar subject or using a specifically lit background. His third approach is observation, he likes to look at the subject by itself before he attempts to photograph it. Looking at how the light strikes the different edges and surfaces, how reflective, transparent or opaque it is.

Although it sounds like a lot of planning, Joe never uses a predetermined lighting formula because he feels it doesn't work and because each subject, no matter how similar to a previous one, has its own unique characteristics and problems (Brown, 1990:18).

On the next page Joe explains one of his images, what he wanted to do and how he achieved it. This was taken directly out of the book 'Lighting secrets for the professional photographer' written by Joe Braun together with A. Brown and T. Grodin.



GREEN PEAS SHOT

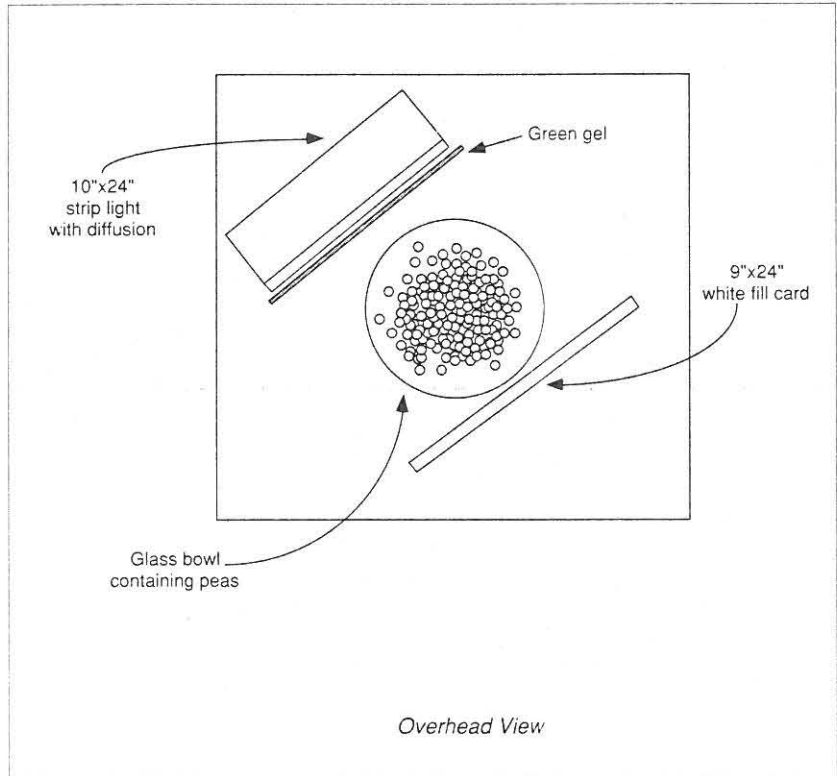
WHAT I WANTED TO GET:

This image was part of a calendar that a local design firm planned to use in a direct mail self-promotion. The problem was photographing the peas to show roundness, dimension, and their bright “pea green” color. Capturing the green of peas was especially important because the designer wanted to pick up that same green for other graphic elements on the calendar spread. Green is particularly hard to get on film, so I tried to plan this shot even more carefully than usual.

HOW I GOT IT:

I began by lighting the peas with a 9" x 12" strip light from a low angle, the light positioned behind and slightly to the left of the set. This gave the peas a lot of dimension and helped to show some roundness. I also positioned a silver fill card opposite the strip light to fill in some of the shadows and help accent the water drops. This came out pretty much as I had planned.

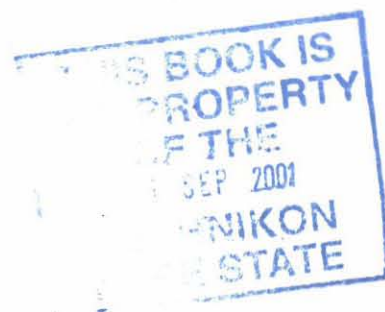
When I looked at the initial Polaroids, however, I noticed that the color in the peas was not coming through (even when I allowed for that film's limited color range). That fresh pea color was an important part of the designer's idea so I absolutely had to come up with a way to get it. I solved my problem by taking a pale green gel and placing it over the main light source. This brought out the green color with all its brightness and saturation and made the shot a success.



Client: Design Centre of Cincinnati
Photographer: Joe Braun
Art Director: Jim Makstaller
Design Studio: Design Centre of Cincinnati



iii (Braun, 1990:33)



Discussion of author's work

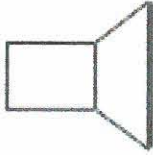
This chapter is a discussion of the author's own work. It contains ten works done by the author through his third year specializing in advertising photography. Each image will be fully discussed, concentrating on the lighting setup, problems and solutions as well as technical information. The image itself and a line diagram of the lighting setup in the studio will accompany each discussion.

Equipment used by the author

- Sinar 4x5 large format view camera with a full range of lenses from 150mm to 360mm.
- Studio flash heads: full range of studio flashes, Elinchrom 2000, 3000 and 4000 standard studio flash heads.
- Elinchrom studio power pack.
- Range of accessories like snoots, gels, reflectors etc.
- Flash meters: Polaris flash meter, Broncolour digital flash meter.
- Manfrotto tripods and light stands.
- Elinchrom Fibre Lite System.
- Perspex infinity curve.
- Small hand held touch.

(For more detailed descriptions on specific equipment see Chapter 2:4)

Lighting Symbol Key



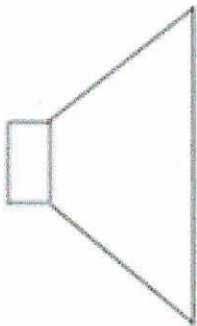
Standard flash head.



Flash head with Spot attachment.



4x5 inch View Camera.



Flash head with
medium size soft box.



Reflector.

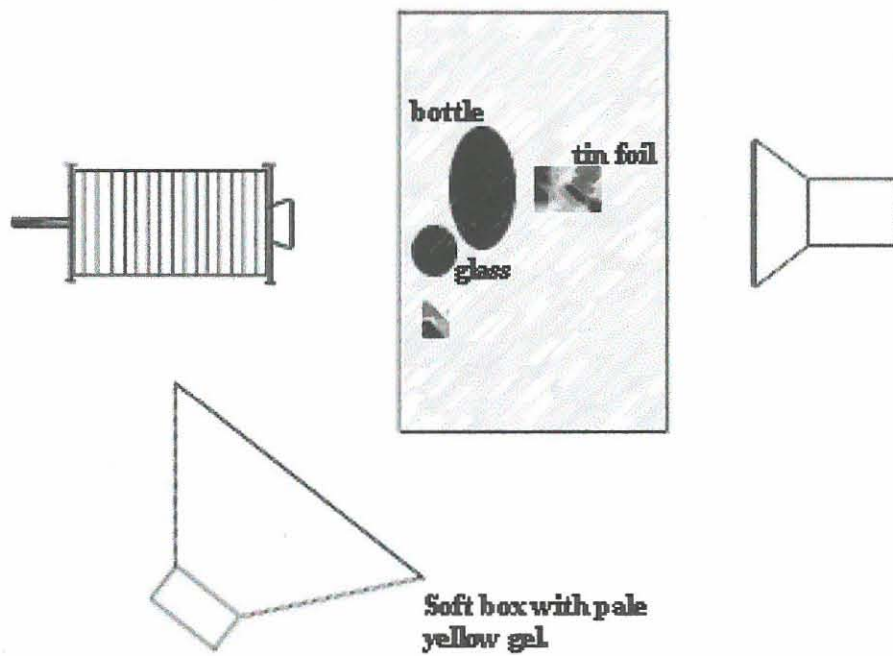
(See chapter 2:4)

Mellow Wood Brandy

The success of this photograph depends much on the warm atmosphere created by the light shining through the bottle. This was done by placing a standard studio flash head (Elinchrom 3000) behind the bottle, with a piece of tin foil placed flat on the table directly behind the bottle. The light reflected off the tin foil, through the bottle creating the warm yellow light on the table. The liquid used in the glass was food colouring mixed to resemble the colour of the brandy. A small strip of tin foil, placed next to the glass, was also used to liven up the liquid in the glass. The second light source used was a medium size soft box directly to camera right. This was used to illuminate the label on the bottle and give some definition on the edges of the glass. The soft box was covered with a pale yellow gel to maximize the overall warm feeling of the image. A relatively small aperture (f8) was used to throw parts of the glass and background out of focus. The final result is a strong, very atmospheric image using design and light to capture the essence of the product.

Lens: 360mm
Exposure: f8 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Mellow Wood Brandy



(See Key: page 17)

Mellow Wood Brandy



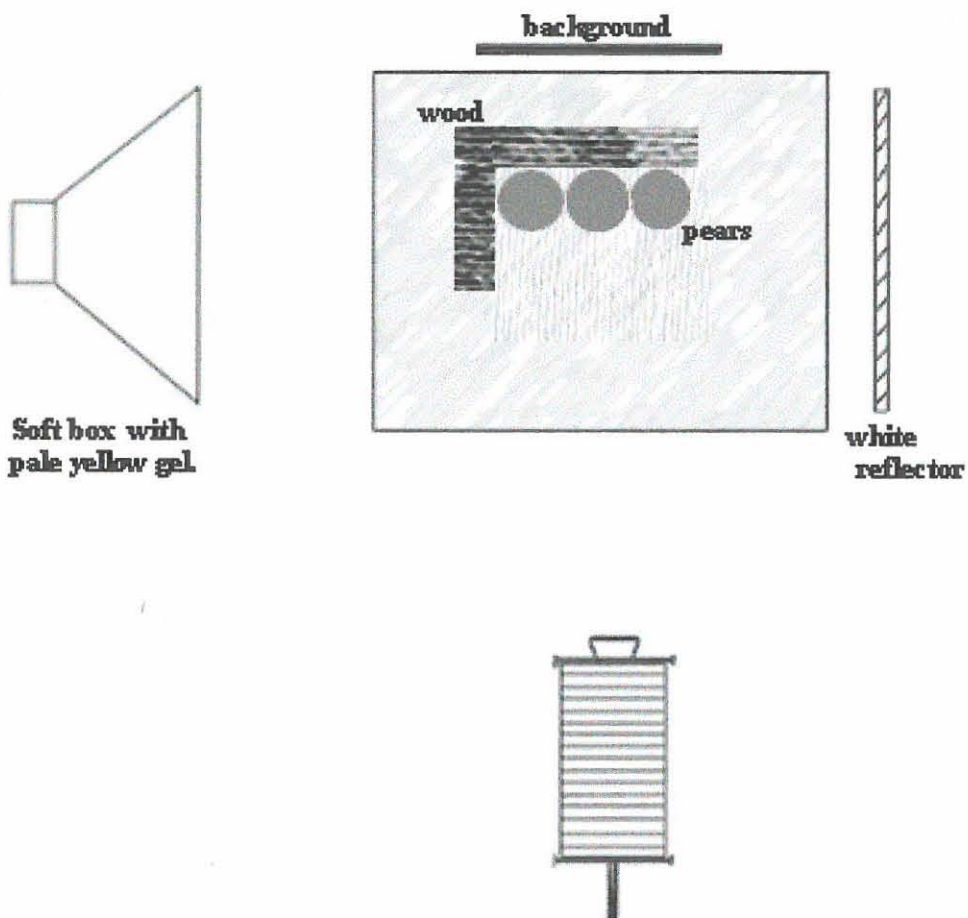
Pears

This is a photograph that relies on texture created by dramatic lighting. The lighting is very simple, but very effective. A medium size soft box directly left from the setup is the main and only illumination. It is covered with a pale yellow gel to warm the image up. A white reflector is placed on the right across from the soft box to reflect some light into the shadows. That is all, but this lighting, together with the textures and shapes of the pears, wood and hessian fabric create a very atmospheric image. Composition also played an important role, arranging the three pears together to achieve the best modeling of the light on it and to exploit the texture and form. Texture is the main compositional element in this image (See page 10), using the wood, hessian and pears as elements played of against each other. A large aperture (f 22) was used to create a large depth of field* to capture all the detail. Although many advertising images follow an in your face formula, a image like this can be just as effective relaying on mood rather than brand name.

Lens: 240mm
Exposure: f22 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Depth of field: The distance between nearest and furthest parts of a subject which can be imaged in acceptably sharp focus at one setting of the lens. (Langford, 1989:293)

Pears



Pears

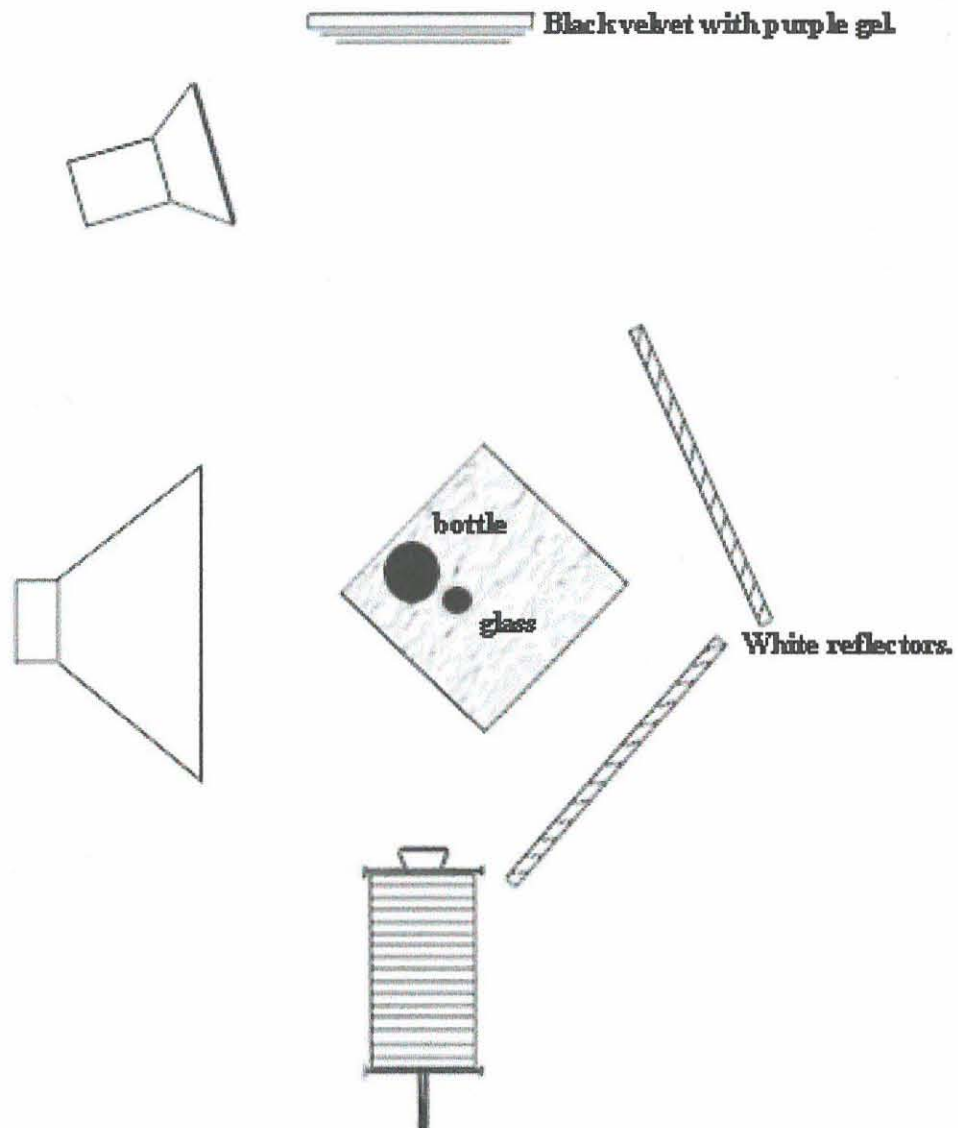


St. Raphael

For this image advertising red wine the background plays the most important role. This was done by using a purple gel on black velvet with a light shining on it from a sharp angle and so creating the light pattern. This was set up far behind the bottle to keep it out of focus while a shallow depth of field was used. The result is a background looking like lights in the distance and creating a lively background that focuses on the bottle. The bottle and glass was placed on a slab of rock creating a textured surface in contrast with the smooth appearance of the rest of the image. The liquid in the glass is water and food colouring mixed to resemble red wine. The lighting consists of a soft box to camera left and two white reflectors on the right. One reflector to help model the bottle creating a thin white line on the right edge, the other was used to illuminate the label and glass. This is an unusual image with the background creating a very 'open' feel like it might be outdoors at night.

Lens: 240mm
Exposure: f8 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

St. Raphael



St. Raphael



Koo

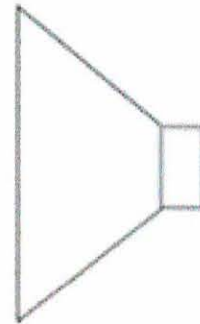
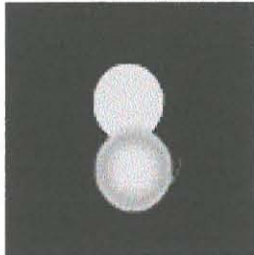
Instead of just creating a straightforward pack shot, a different approach was used to create a very pleasing image. Canned goods are usually not very exciting, so a different viewpoint was combined with the use of shape and colour. The well-known label of the product was put inside the can which created interplay between the oval label and the round shape of the can and lid. The shape of the peach slices also interplay with the label. The overall mood of the image is that of a can freshly opened with the label and peaches inside creating an overall warm feeling. The lighting was planned so as to show the texture and shape of the peaches inside the liquid and cast highlights on the liquid and bubbles. The can was photographed from above with a standard flash head at the top left of the setup to cast the highlights. A medium size soft box to camera right was the main illumination and was used with a pale yellow gel to fill in the shadows and bring out the colour of the peaches and label. The can was placed on a piece of black velvet to leave the background completely black. The bubbles were already inside the can but were moved to the edges with just the one small bubble on the label to show it is submerged in the liquid. A relatively large depth of field was used to give good sharpness throughout the image.

Lens: 240mm
Exposure: F22 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Koo



Black velvet

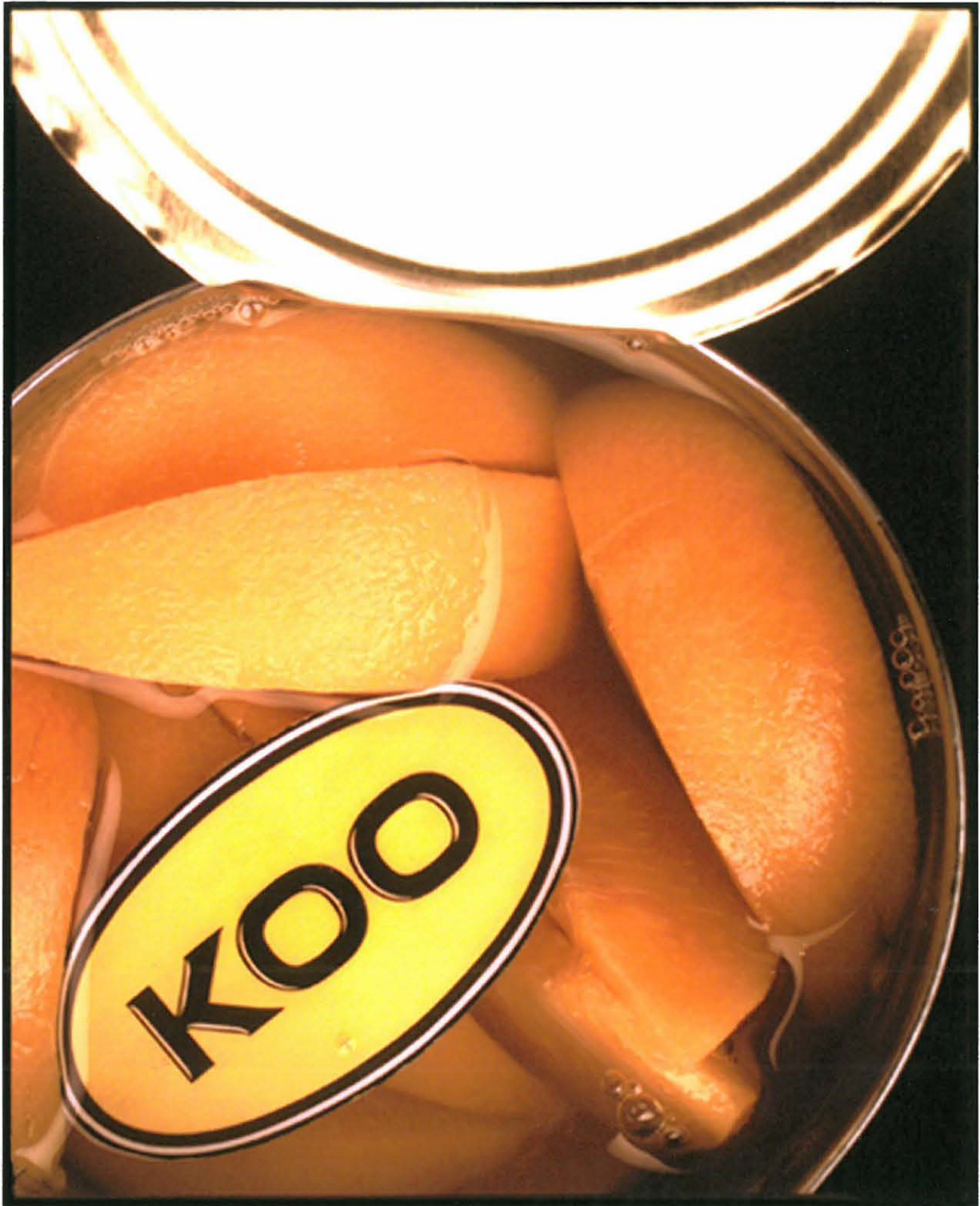


soft box with yellow gel



camera directly from above.

Koo

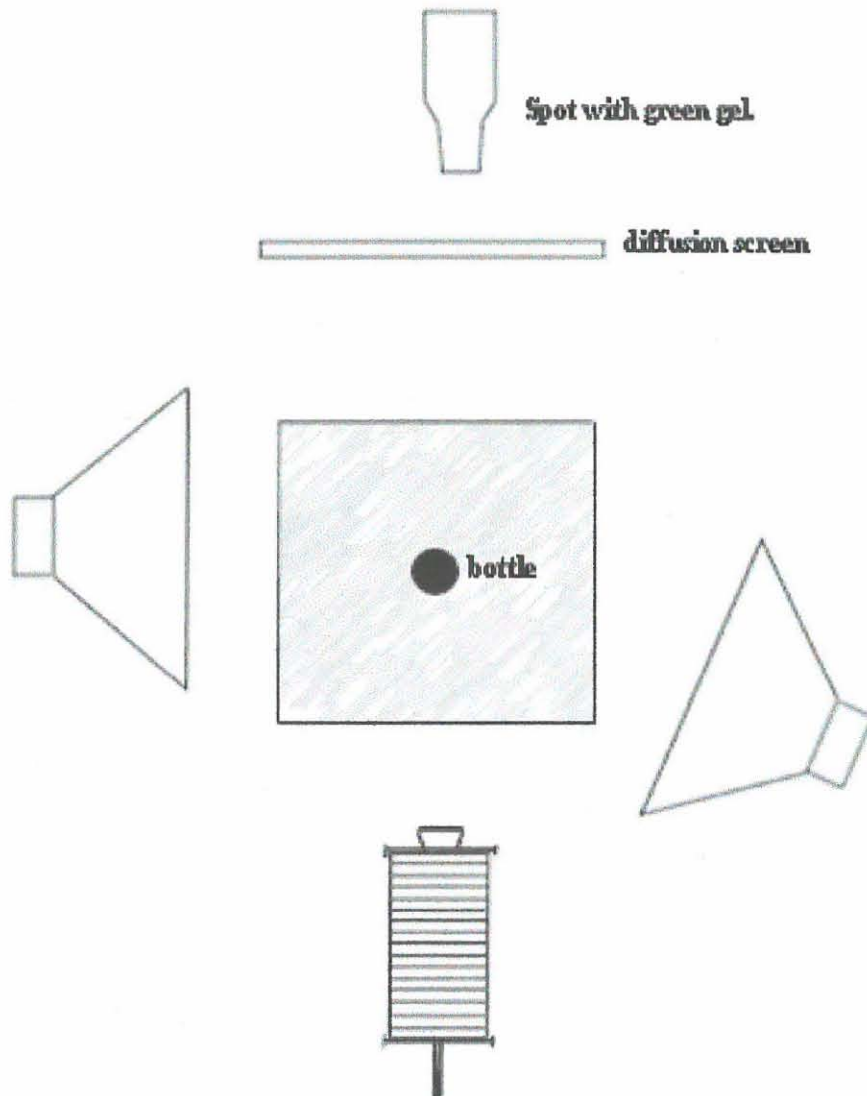


Heineken

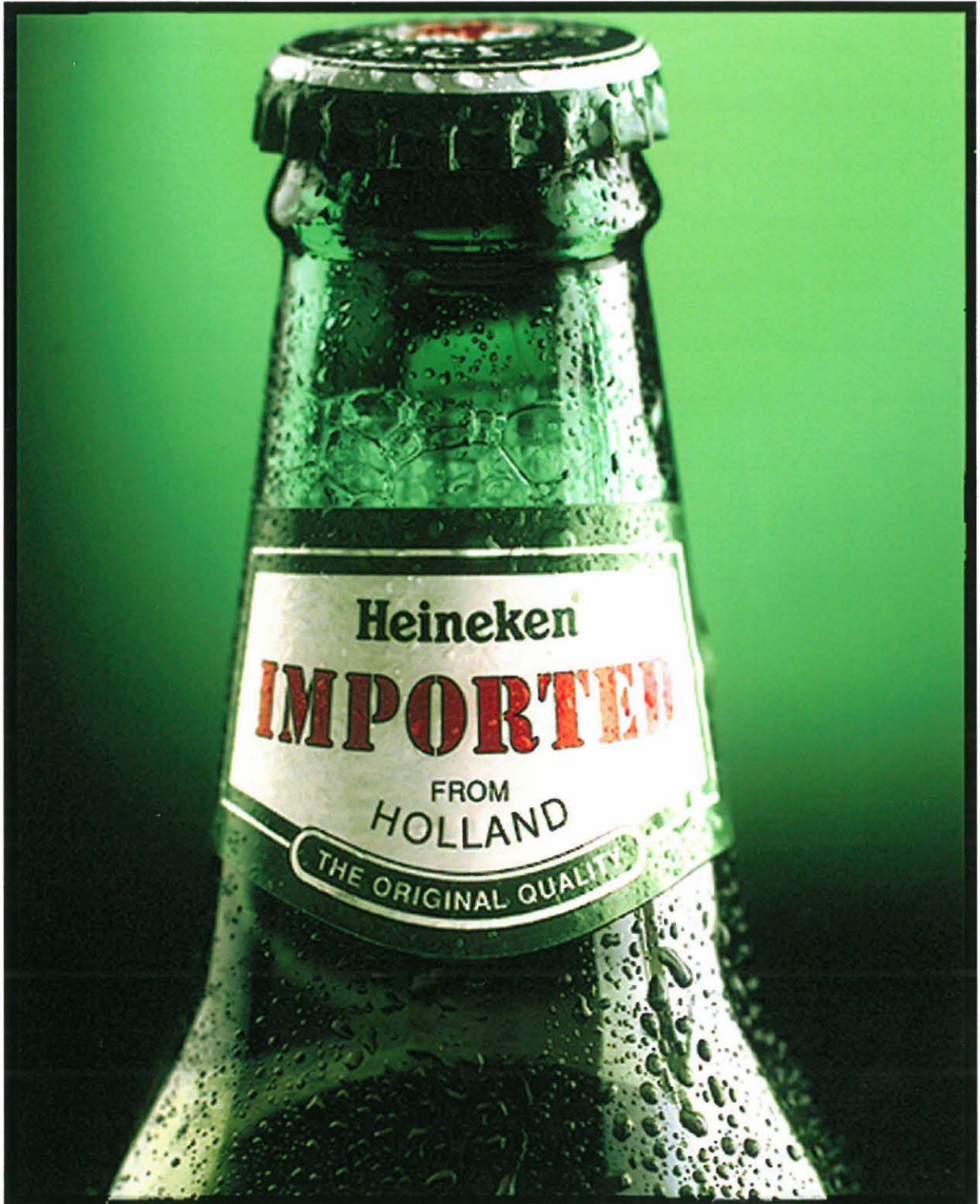
This photograph relies on straightforward brand name recognition. The bottle was placed in the middle of the image with no distracting props and only the top part, mostly recognized in beer brands, was photographed. This approach shows confidence in the product, saying that everyone recognizes and knows the quality of the product. The subject lighting consists of two medium sized soft boxes; one 90° left of the bottle, the other slightly in front on the right side. This creates a more evenly balanced look with the opposing 'bands' of light on either side of the bottle. The background lighting was planned to further balance the image with the green glow slightly to the right contrasting the centered object. The bright green corresponds with the brand name and frames the bottle. A standard flash head with a spot light attachment, covered with a bright green gel created the background. This was positioned behind a projection screen to produce the green glow. The water droplets on the bottle were sprayed on directly before the image was taken to prevent the drops from evaporating because of the heat from the modeling lights and the time to set up the image. Lastly the bottle was lightly shaken to produce the bubbles inside the bottle which greatly adds to the overall image. A 360 mm lens was used to fill the frame with only a part of the bottle and was taken on f8, a small aperture in relation to the focal length to create a shallow depth of field. This was done to enhance the 'glow' effect of the background and to throw the edges of the bottle slightly out of focus, drawing the eye to the name.

Lens: 360mm
Exposure: F8 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Heineken



Heineken

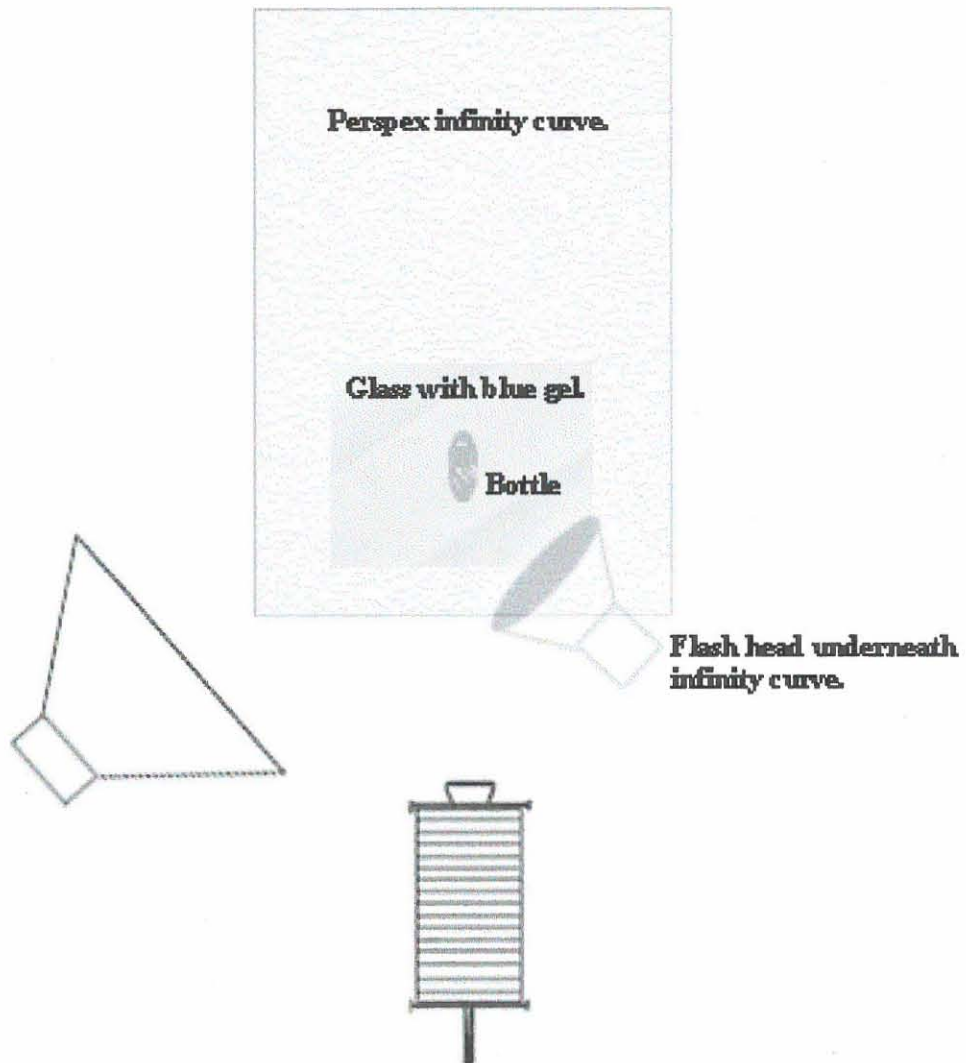


Dreams

The approach for this image came from the name of the perfume. Selective focus was used to create a dream like appearance. Although this looks like a simple image, it was quite difficult to execute. The whole image is an illusion, the bottle is not standing up, but was laid flat on a piece of glass. A shallow depth of field, together with camera movements was used to throw everything out of focus except for the name. The glass was placed above a Perspex infinity curve. Underneath the glass a blue gel was placed on the infinity curve. The lighting for this image was simple enough, but difficult at the same time. Two standard flash heads were used. One to light the bottle and one to light the blue gel from underneath the infinity curve. This created an exposure problem resulting that the background was completely blown out. The lights had to be balanced perfectly so that the bottle and background could be exposed correctly, rendering detail throughout. The end result was a soft dream like image creating the illusion of the bottle floating in the air.

Lens: 300mm
Exposure: f5.6 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Dreams



Dreams

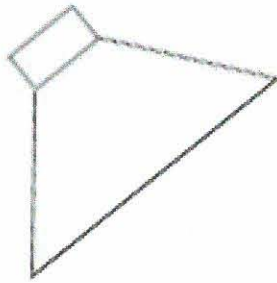


Draught Guinness

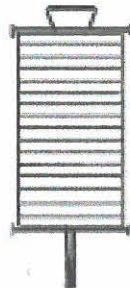
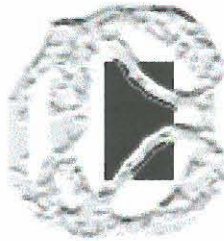
The success of this image was using the right elements together to create the desired effect. With the very strong design of the can itself, it was unnecessary to create a large setup. Using the can by itself, combined with the textured background created by the rope, produced the right atmosphere. The exact appearance of the rope was vital for the success of this image. The winding rope leads the eye all over the image, but does not overpower the product itself. In fact, it helps to accentuate the product, making it stand out in the image. For this to work, the rope has to be placed exactly right, and the depth of field perfect. A small aperture of f8 was used to throw certain parts of the rope out of focus. If the whole image had been perfectly sharp, it would have been to 'busy' and confusing. The lighting also had to tie in with both the rope and the can. The black can was highly reflective and this posed some problems as the soft box created a bright white band over the product name. Lowering the soft box level to the subject decreased the highlight and solved the problem. The whole setup was done on the ground and photographed directly from above. The main and only light was placed at the top left of the image on the ground. It was covered with a pale yellow gel to warm up the image and especially the rope. A white reflector was placed directly opposite the soft box on the lower right side of the image, to reflect some light into the dark areas created by the low angle of the light. This is not really a complicated setup, but by putting some thought into the design of the image, the elements could be pulled together to create a pleasing result.

Lens: 240mm
Exposure: f8 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Draught Guinness

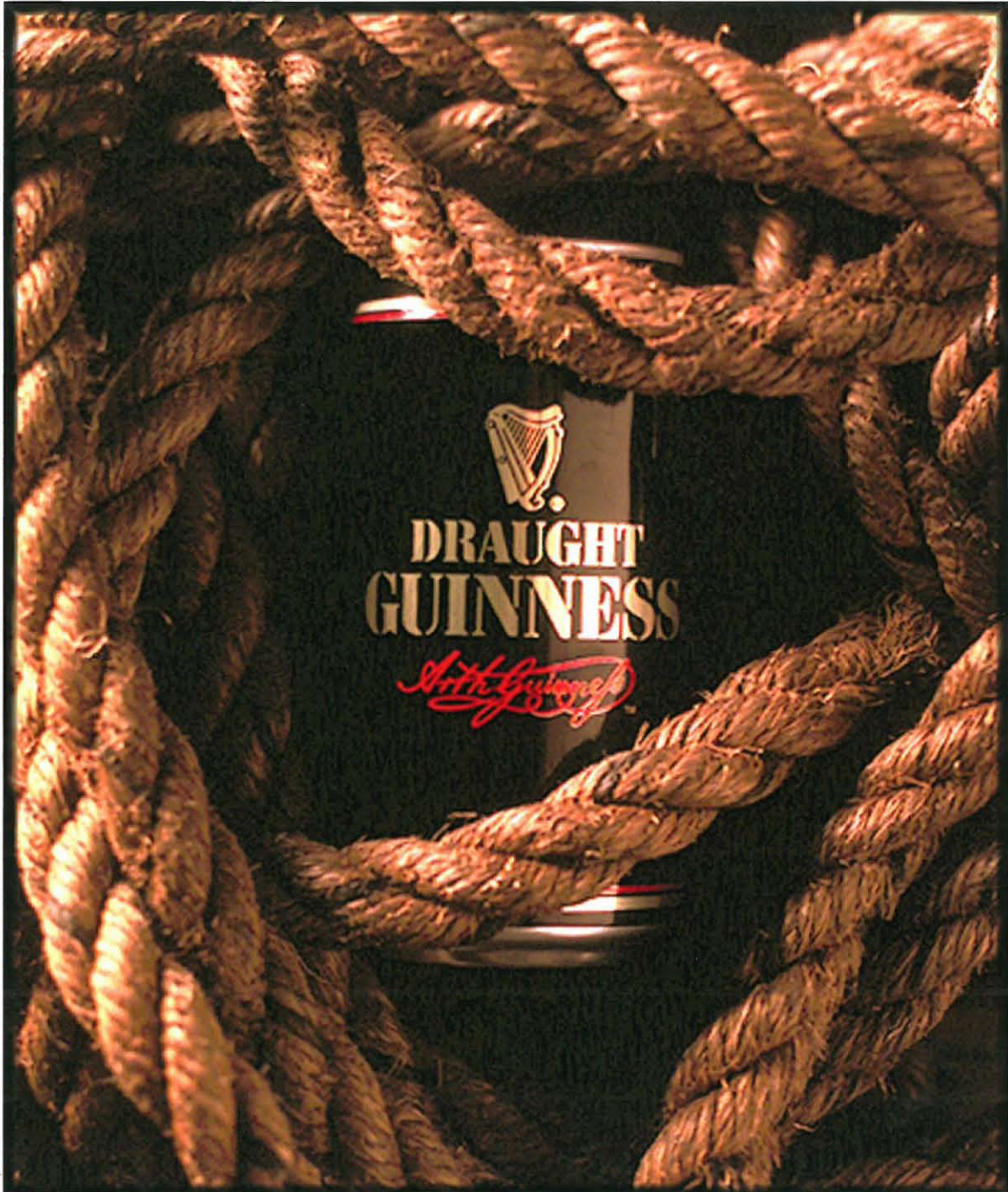


Can and rope.



Camera directly from above.

Draught Guinness

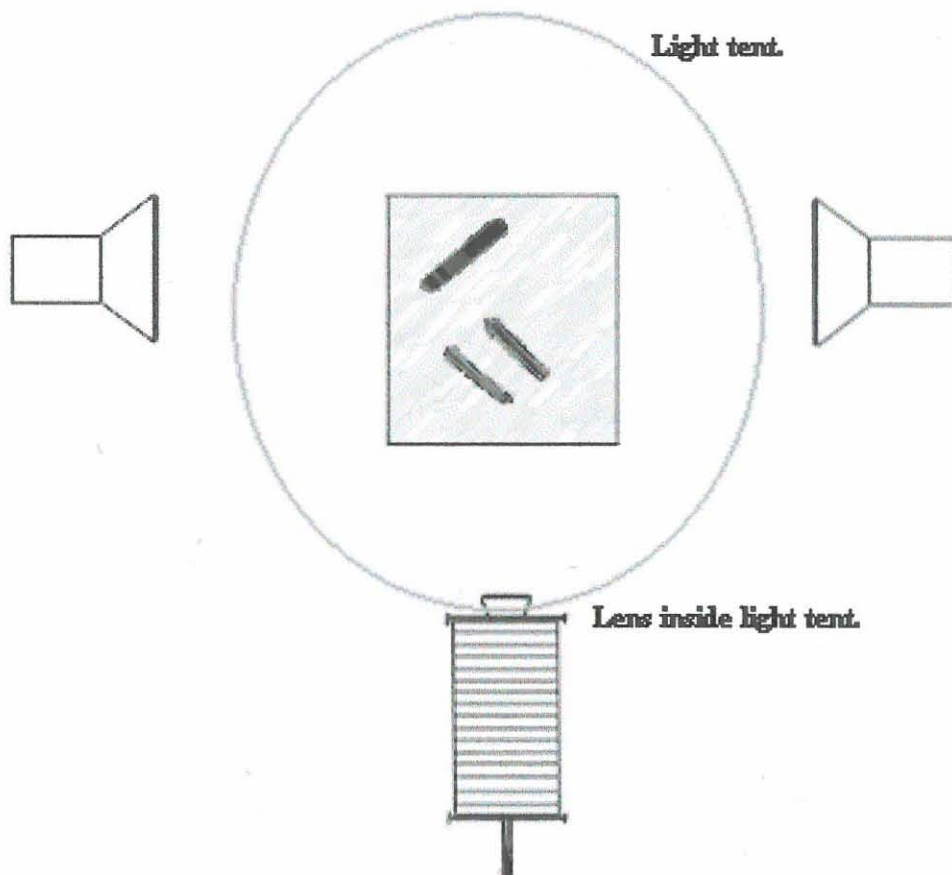


Cutlery

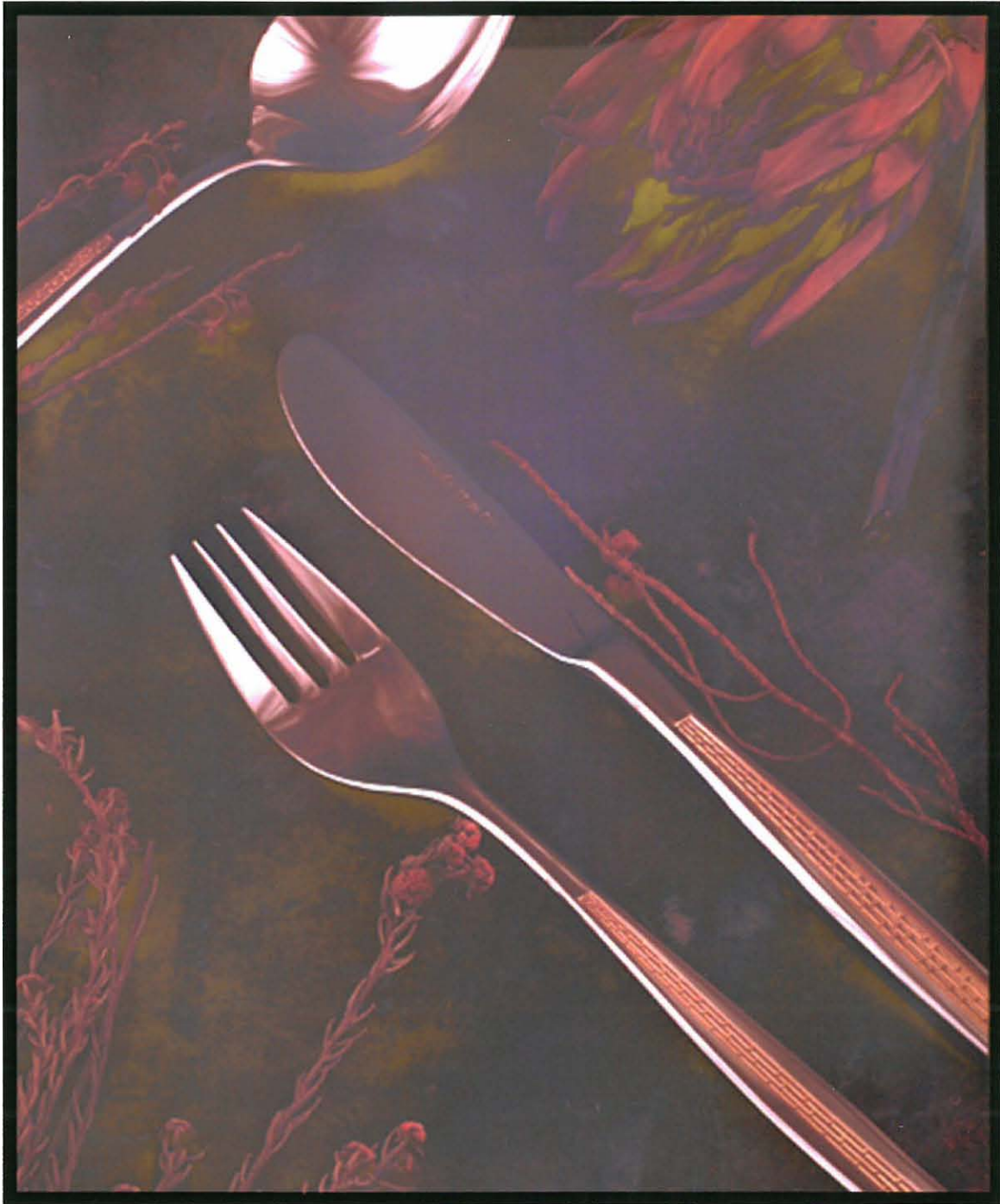
The strange appearance of this image happened quite by accident. It was taken as a straight advertising image of cutlery, but during the processing of the film the chemicals got contaminated and this was the result. There was a total reversal of colour in certain parts of the image creating a strange colour cast. Although this would by definition be wrong the end result was quite pleasing, maybe even better than the correctly processed image would have been. The lighting was done through a light tent to control the reflections (see page 8). Only the lens of the camera was put inside the tent preventing any outside reflections on the cutlery. Two lights were used from outside the light tent, one on each side of the image. The tent diffused the light and created even illumination throughout the image. Some dried plants were used with the cutlery creating an interesting composition with the metal against the organic material. Although the final result happened by accident, it is a good example of how experimentation with different techniques can produce interesting results.

Lens: 240mm
Exposure: f11 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Cutlery



Cutlery



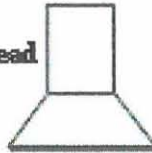
Glen Grant

For this type of product, which relies on quality and tradition as selling points, a classical approach was needed. The bottle was placed next to its container to create the feeling that it was reflecting in the container. In actuality the image is printed on the container to get this effect. To bring out the rich colour of the whiskey the right background was needed. Using a piece of square Perspex created this. A standard flash head with a honeycomb attachment (grid spot, see p5) was placed behind the Perspex, creating a yellow square while at the same time illuminating the whiskey. The bottle and container was placed on a piece of wood for a more organic feel. The wood was placed at such an angle to be in contrast with the horizontal and vertical lines in the image and also to create the look that the bottle was standing on the edge of a table. The lighting of the bottle and container are simple. There is a medium size soft box to the left of the bottle being the main illumination. A weaker soft box was used to the right of the camera filling in the shadows and label. This lighting threw a light yellow reflection onto the wood and container. One problem encountered during the session was that the brand name on the bottle was very reflective and the soft box blew out the left letters. Since the product name is so important, the problem was solved by placing a strip of black card on the side of the soft box and turning the bottle slightly. The final image was taken with a shallow depth of field to ensure that the Perspex background was completely out of focus creating a soft glowing square that frames the product.

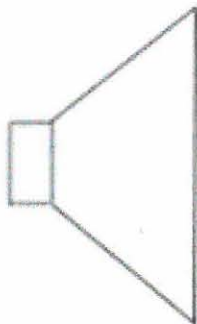
Lens: 240mm
Exposure: F8 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Glen Grant

Standard flash head
with yellow gel

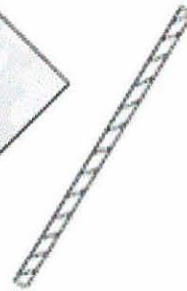
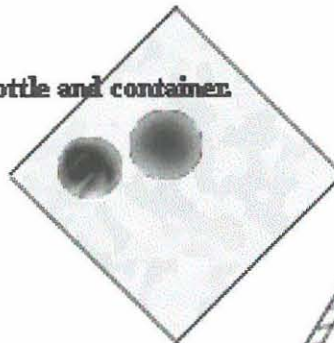


Diffusion screen.



Soft box with pale
yellow gel

Bottle and container.



Glen Grant

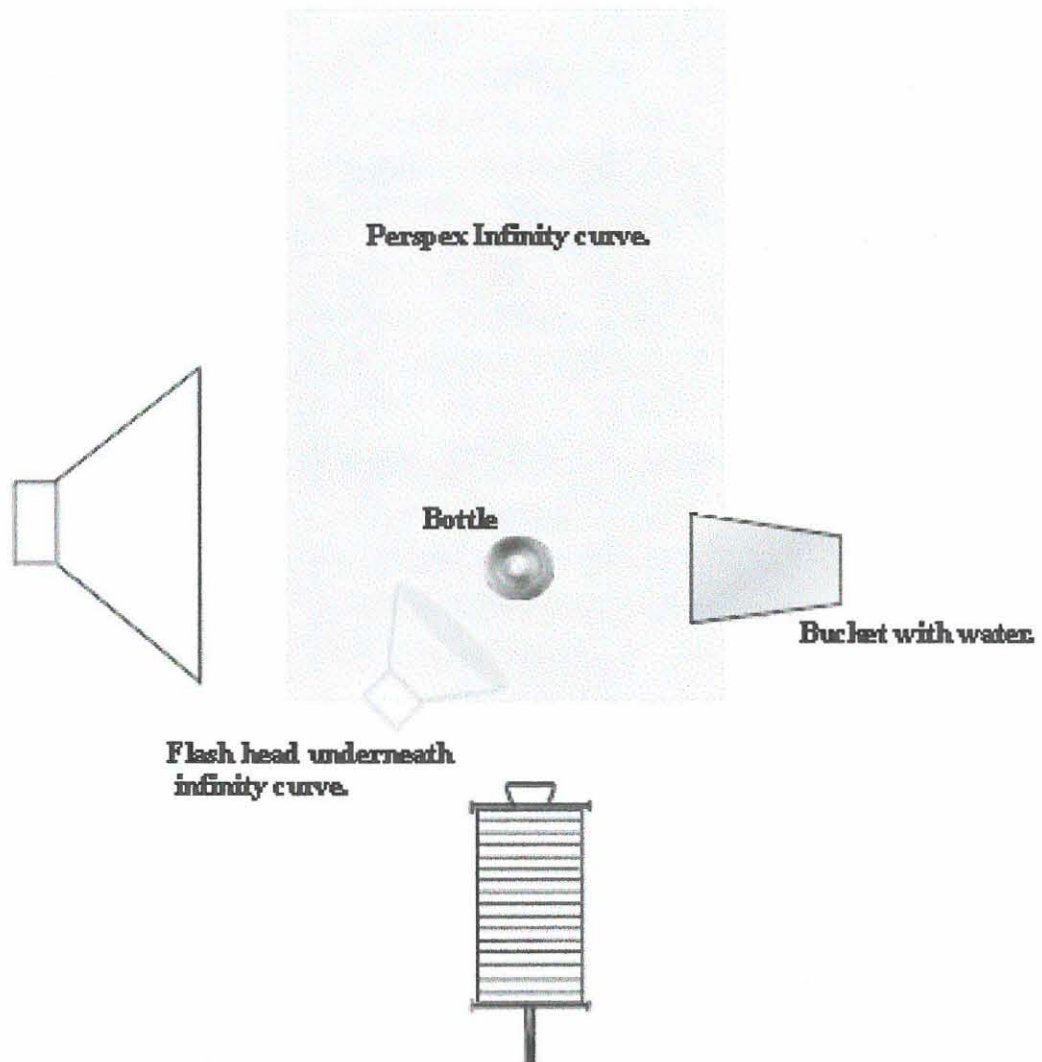


Valpre`

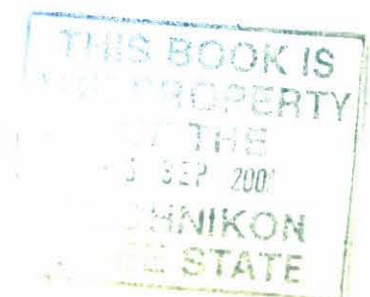
The approach taken for this mineral water advertisement was to create the fresh, energetic feeling associated with water. Using movement to achieve this, the water was captured on film ('frozen') as it hits the bottle. Simply throwing a bucket of water against the side of the bottle achieved this while at the same time making the exposure. Since its impossible to know what the result will look like immediately, a few extra slides was taken to ensure at least one correct image. The flash was powered down so as not to completely freeze the water but to attain some blur, thus suggesting movement. The water covered the whole label and created an interesting image by distorting the words on the label, but left it still readable. The bottle was placed on a Perspex infinity curve because a white background was needed and also to illuminate the bottle from underneath. The lighting on the bottle is a medium size soft box to the left of the camera as the main illumination. A standard flash head was used from underneath the infinity curve further illuminating the bottle and water. When working with water in this manner, it is important to protect the lights from water to avoid electrical accidents. Placing the lights well out of the way, or covering the lights with plastic covers can solve this problem. To the right of the bottle a piece of black card was placed to help create some definition and modeling on the moving water. The end result was an exciting image presenting the product in a fresh new light.

Lens: 240mm
Exposure: f8 1/125 sec.
Film: Fujichrome Provia 100

Valpre`



Valpre`



'Advertising photography affects all our lives.'

Allyn Solomon, Photographer. (Soloman 1982:177)

Never before have the above quote been truer than in the time we live in today.

'The Art of Persuasion', as it has been called is used everyday, to influence you, to persuade you, to inform you about the latest products and to convince you. Never before have we been bombarded with so much information at one time, and the fact is that many of it goes by unnoticed. To create a photograph that catches our eye is something special, but the best advertising photographs do much more, they capture our emotions and imagination.

It is the work of the advertising photographer to create these images everyday, flawless images that speaks to you. The ability to transform an idea into a visual tool, a tool of communication that delivers the message in just the right way, this is what the photographer must do, and do well to succeed. This might not be seen as fine art photography in the commercial world out there, but like art these images speak to you and confront your views, it conveys feeling and it leaves you wanting or needing. Call it Communication Art if you will, because the fact is: Advertising photography affects all our lives.

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